: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

FOREWORD

AM interested in this book for two reasons. The first is that the 114
authors are my nephew and his wife—both devoted anthropologists,
whom this painstaking research into the least known of our South
frican native tribes has been a real labour of love. While earth's
undations were shaking in the convulsion of our times they were
sorbedly probing into the mysteries of the Rain-Queen and her
meless' society. To me this seemed an almost unnatural devotion to
ience—until I came to read the MS. of this book and found it a fascin-
ing distraction to the war problems which form my daily life. Perhaps
e curious reader may find it no less entertaining.

The second reason is that for at least half a century the Rain-Queen 643
d her people and the curious stories about them have interested me.
he was said to be very light coloured: was she a descendant of one of a
uple of Boer girls who were said to have been spared by those natives,
hen early in the nineteenth century they massacred the Van Rensburg
rty without leaving a trace behind? What was the mystery about her
hich made it almost impossible for Europeans to catch a glimpse of
r? Had the Natives adopted a white queen as something divine? Even
these were mere baseless fancies, other points of personal interest
tracted me to the subject of the queen. Long ago one of my daughters,
hen a college girl, visited the country of the queen with a company of
iends in the hope that they might be able to see her. In that mountain-
s, almost roadless country the party was overtaken by a violent rain-
orm and late at night arrived at her headquarters drenched, exhausted,
d more dead than alive. The queen ordered a hut to be cleaned and
repared for them where they stayed the night; and next day, having
obably heard that she was the Prime Minister's daughter, gave a
rsonal audience to her. Imagine the thrill! That established a personal
nd between the queen and my wife, suitably recognized in the custom-
y South African way. Then many years after, my nephew and his wife
ere staying at the headquarters of the queen in order to gather the
aterial for this book. From time to time they informed me of the most
teresting anthropological finds they were making. I also learnt that
ar her headquarters was a forest of cycads (*Encephalartos transvenosus* [137]
ver-Davy), one of the most unique botanical features in South Africa.
his decided me at last to spend a holiday in the queen's country, and,
ith my relatives as guides, I had a most interesting experience. I saw
w they had, through simple humanness, overcome the fears and the
yness of the people and were on most familiar terms both with the
een and her subjects. I saw my cycad forest. Best of all, I saw that
nderful woman, well over sixty, but strong in body and character—
ery inch a queen. We exchanged information and gifts in the tradi-
nal style, and I could thank her for her kindness to my daughter in
e distant past. She was much taken up with all the useful domestic
ticles my wife had sent her. A couple of years afterwards I was once

[i.e. J.C. Smuts--Ed.]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

133
137
133
361

I. THE LOVEDU LANDSCAPE

(a) THE HILL OF CYCADS

(b) FIELDS AND VILLAGES ON THE FOOTHILLS

[facing p. 16]

: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

CHAPTER II

A PICTURE OF EVERYDAY THINGS

A visitor's impressions of the manners and interests of the people—a glimpse of a village and its huts, of the preparation of food and etiquette in eating, and of the decorum of drinking beer—the evening scene, with its hearth fires, riddles, and stories—the seasonal calendar of activities.

s you drive along the winding road on a visit to Mujaji's reserve, 361
you find yourself in a narrow valley between the two ranges of
lovedu mountains, where flows the Mulodozi River, fed by countless
eams from the bush-covered slopes above. It is the month of March.
e mealies in the fields, visible on all sides through the bushy vegetation,
nd dark green and high, appearing to grow right to the very doorsteps
the villages you pass. At first and to the untrained eye the country
ms relatively empty, so well do the dwellings merge into the general
w. On looking more closely, however, you see cluster after cluster
conical, thatched roofs peeping out from the bush on the hillsides,
ne of them perched on ledges like eagles' eyries. For the reserve is in
lity very thickly populated. The villages are small, five to fifteen huts
ng the average size; a few large villages of from forty to eighty huts
present the old order of things, just as those of only two huts do the
w. But the Lovedu village was never very large and never could
mpare, either in size or arrangement, with the great towns of the
wana and of some Sotho.

As you go down a steep dip to cross a stream, a sullen-looking woman 482
lancing a wide-mouthed basket on her head, her legs heavy with leg 301
gs which reach almost up to the knee, suspiciously turns her back on 291
u. She wears a cloth of red salampore behind and before, knotted on 276
e shoulders; while from her neck dangles the ubiquitous snuff box on
necklet of plaited string, black with dirt, but holding three or four
assured heirlooms, large deep-blue or white beads and perhaps some
all blue, red, and yellow ones of the kind that were brought from
odesia long before the European had come. A little further on you
r a shout, '*Makhuwa, Makhuwa*' (Europeans, Europeans), as a group
herdboys runs towards the road. The younger ones among them,
re toddlers playing outside their village, scurry away crying to their
thers, and scatter the chickens from the ash-heap as they do so. A
dboy, wearing nothing but his loin covering and an old tattered coat
ich was once his father's, shouts 'More Bass,' European words he has
ked up from his elders; but the rest run joyfully after the car, rending
sir with their shrieks.

The road begins to ascend steeply up the hill to the capital, but here, 487
you wish to visit headman Raselaka, you must get out and walk. As
go in single file along the narrow footpath, bounded on either side
creeper-covered bush or long grass higher than your shoulders, you
come aware of a strong smell somewhat reminiscent of turpentine. 137
a few moments you discover its cause—the ripening fruits of the

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

morula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malamatsha wee; budi ga dzwala ga dzwala ga fɔlɔja, ga vutla vuphabaleni*' (Malematsha, Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise song of a district in Lovedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fiṭhulelani*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiṭhulelani zenu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhunye*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lentɔhwa* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. *This is a charm, laid when the village was* built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or *mudutu, Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The